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THE HISTORY OF THE U-2

The development and use of this collection device is a classic demonstration of CIA's ability to:

- (1) Respond with initiative and imagination to a top priority national security requirement.
- (2) Enlist the services of the best talents throughout the government and in private industry.
- (3) Procure, deploy, and operate in secrecy.
- (4) Coordinate the needs of the United States intelligence community in balancing national requirements against actual collection capabilities.
- (5) Establish a national facility to ensure the most efficient use of the product.
- (6) Foresee the need for follow-on systems even as the U-2 was coming on stream.

Although tight compartmentation was a hallmark on the project from the beginning; many Agency elements, other than the parent division, have been involved. Internal coordination of a sanitized version will be long and complex. One of the more delicate questions will be how to deal with the involvement of numerous foreign government officials whose cooperation was essential to the operation of the U-2 overseas. It may be necessary to gloss over details, including names. Second, there was a massive support effort from within the Agency, and full consideration should be given to the accomplishments of finance, the lawyers, security, logistics, and medicine. Third, the first users of the product, especially NPIC and the cleared elements in DD/I, found themselves with a whole new dimension of intelligence in helping them to answer the critical intelligence questions being asked by the top policy-makers of the government.

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Internal coordination may be relatively simple compared to external coordination. Not only were the top officials in the Agency involved with day-to-day details of the U-2 project, so were the top levels of the entire US government, beginning with President Eisenhower. The intelligence community participated, particularly through the mechanism of the Ad Hoc Requirements Committee. Each flight was reviewed by the 5412 group, with top representatives from the White House, the Department of State and the Department of Defense. The Atomic Energy Commission furnished the real estate out west; NASA provided cover; the FAA and other agencies were involved.

The largest single involvement was with the United States Air Force. It was the Air Force who furnished vital support, and it was the Air Force which conducted an unrelenting campaign to take the operation away from CIA. This will be a sticky wicket, but I think I know enough people to manage it. The tactic will be to accentuate the positive, which is not too hard to do.

My selection of the U-2 history is based on three premises. One, it is the only existing history in the Agency program which has been done in enough depth and comprehension to work with on sanitization. Second, it is one of my favorite stories which does full credit to all elements of the Agency in its role as an arm of US national security policy. Third, it has all the built-in hazards of coordination and outside involvement which will be part of sanitizing any Agency history. I propose we learn on a tough one. That will make the easier ones that much simpler.

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